

# ALPHA

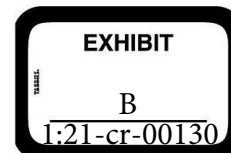
HUMAN SERVICES

Thank you for your recent inquiry about Alpha Human Services. I hope the following information addresses some of your questions about Alpha's residential treatment program for men who have committed sexual offenses.

Alpha's residential program is an intense therapeutic environment in a community based setting treating men convicted of sexual abuse. The residents are involved in various therapy groups, individual therapy, and family therapy from Monday to Friday, with groups often offered twice a day. In addition, they are expected to complete experiential and written assignments regarding relevant topics and participate in a variety of tasks related to maintaining the program, such as preparing meals, house cleaning, and vehicle maintenance. The program utilizes a system of rewards and consequences to facilitate behavioral changes. It is expected to take about 13 to 18 months to complete the residential portion of treatment. While the actual treatment length depends upon the progress of the individual, to complete the program the minimum period of time in the residential phase is 13 months. During this period of the program, residents live in the house and are not employed in the general community. While not a locked facility, Alpha is licensed by the Minnesota Department of Corrections as a minimum security facility providing 24 hour supervision and accountability for a maximum of 24 residents.

After completing the residential phases of the program clients complete a minimum of 12 months in the post-residential phase. During this phase of the program they secure employment and live in apartments with peers in the same stage of treatment. During this portion of treatment they continue to be monitored by the staff, attend one therapy group a week, and meet with their therapist while being responsible for their own cost of living expenses. During the community phase clients are no longer charged a per diem fee; however, they are assessed a monthly fee for services. Clients graduate from treatment after completing the post-residential phase. Please refer to a program brochure for additional information.

Alpha has been treating sex offenders for over 40 years. A post-doctoral study of recidivism was completed in June of 1996. The study reviewed the records of the 225 men who had attended one day or more of treatment at Alpha from 1974 through 1994. Their status at the time of termination was compared to additional criminal convictions recorded by the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension. The study reported that among those who completed the program, 89% had no subsequent felony or misdemeanor convictions for sexual behavior. For those who terminated themselves from the program, 78% had not been convicted of any sexual reoffense. Among residents who were terminated by the staff, 69% had not sexually reoffended. A study conducted by Alpha in 2017 found that of the 203 men who participated in the program from 1994-2005, 8.6% of those who completed the program were found to have sexually reoffended.



The current per diem rate for participation in the program is as follows

Treatment	\$105.56
Room and Board	\$41.34
Minnicare Tax	\$1.90
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$148.80</b>

Individuals who are paying their own costs of treatment must make a down payment to cover 45 days of placement and must prepay for the first month of treatment. Subsequent payments are made on the first of each month. All residents are required to maintain medical insurance coverage while they are in the program; however, insurance rarely has covered placement in the program.

All potential clients must complete an intake assessment which consists of a review of requested documents and a personal interview with a member of the Alpha's intake department. There is no cost for a review of the available documentation. This entails a review of the police complaint, the presentence investigation report, any psychological evaluations, and any summary reports from any previous therapy providers. Should the records indicate that an applicant may be appropriate for placement a personal interview is then required prior to admission.

Prior to entering the program, probationers from states other than Minnesota must be accepted by the Minnesota Department of Corrections for a transfer of supervision through the interstate Compact.

Thank you for your interest in Alpha Human Services. I hope that this letter adequately addresses some of your questions. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any further questions about the program or referral procedures.

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## Adult Residential Program

**A**s a residential community corrections program, Alpha has been in existence since 1973. The program began treating sex offenders in 1974. Alpha Human Services is a private non-profit corporation licensed and certified by the Minnesota Department of Corrections. It is the only community program certified by the Minnesota Commissioner of Corrections for placement of repeat sex offenders. Information concerning Alpha programs can be obtained by addressing inquiries to the Executive Director (612 872-8218) or the Intake Department (612 823-3707). Inquiries may also be sent to Alpha Human Services, 2712 Fremont Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55408-1198 or by e-mail to [info@alphaservices.org](mailto:info@alphaservices.org). Specific client referrals should be directed to the Intake Department.

### Traditional Residential Treatment

**O**ne of the characteristics distinguishing Alpha from all other Minnesota community-based treatment facilities is that Alpha specializes in providing treatment for most categories of sexually deviant offenders.

The adult residential program is highly structured and provides 24 hour staff coverage. Adult males demonstrating sexually deviant behavior are eligible for admission. Most program participants have a criminal conviction. The primary objective of the program is to modify deviant criminal and antisocial behavior, i.e., to reduce the likelihood of that behavior recurring. In addition to improved emotional and mental health, the program emphasizes adaptive behavior which generally falls into three basic areas: (1) meaningful interpersonal relationships and family interactions, including appropriate sexual behavior and social skills; (2) appropriate work behavior and responsible self-support skills; and (3) a healthy, responsible interaction with the community. Before an individual can successfully complete the program, in most cases, he must have a high school diploma or the equivalent and can either be in school or working full-time. Chemical dependency issues are also addressed by individualized treatment planning.

Although Alpha has a distinct cognitive-behavioral orientation, the techniques used in therapy at Alpha are eclectic and encompass behavioral, affective, and cognitive techniques. In general, the staff takes the position that most behavior is learned, consequently, inappropriate conduct can be replaced by newly learned appropriate behavior. In addition to individual psychotherapy, the program relies heavily on group therapy, and, in a sense, the structure of the program provides a microcosm of society. Alpha emphasizes accountability and individual responsibility for behavior and actions. In each of the first five phases, the resident has the opportunity to earn successive privileges which give him more responsibility in the program and more freedom of movement in the community.

Intensive therapy takes place during the first five phases while the sixth phase (post-residential) is used to gradually ease the individual back into the community and to allow therapy to continue on an outpatient basis. The length of time spent in the program is quite variable, depending on client characteristics and the treatment plan objectives.

### Short-Term Residential Treatment Intervention

Alpha offers a 90-120 day remedial option for sex offenders who are not adequately progressing in their outpatient treatment programs. This is a therapeutic alternative to revocation for those individuals who have not sexually reoffended, but who are in danger of being adversely discharged from outpatient programming due to:

- failure to fully disclose information about current conviction and deviant sexual practices
- failure to adequately participate in the treatment process
- poor attendance
- noncompliance with assignments and restrictions
- monitoring difficulties in the community
- unsupervised contact with victims or minors

#### The objectives are to:

- increase amenability to outpatient treatment
- identify arousal patterns and increase offense disclosure
- increase group participation and interpersonal skills
- decrease deviant arousal patterns
- decrease cognitive rigidity and challenge belief systems
- complete goals formulated with the referral source

#### Methods:

- participation in treatment program milieu
- group therapy participation
- written assignments
- behavioral assignments

#### Optional Services:

- polygraphy
- plethysmography
- psychiatric or psychological evaluation

### 75 Day Residential Sex Offender Evaluation

Alpha offers a residential placement for a comprehensive sex offender evaluation. Clients participate in all programming offered in the residential setting in addition to:

- personality assessment testing
- a plethysmograph examination
- a polygraph examination verifying sexual history disclosures

**The objectives are to:**

- identify offense cycle and precursors
- identify deviant sexual behavior patterns
- identify interpersonal deficits
- assess level of sexual compulsivity
- assess risk for continued sexual aggression
- identify additional patterns of criminal or inappropriate behaviors
- determine an appropriate treatment setting

**Assessment methods:**

- personality assessment testing
- plethysmograph examination to determine patterns of sexual arousal
- polygraph examination to confirm full disclosure about the conviction offense and sexual history
- participation in the general treatment program milieu
- participation in group therapy sessions
- sexuality charting
- empathy assessment

**Additional assessment options:**

- psychiatric evaluations
- chemical dependency evaluations

**A**s previously stated, the primary program goal of Alpha Human Services is to extinguish or reduce the probability of recurring sexually inappropriate or deviant behavior. This larger goal will be satisfied by attempting to resolve a number of contributing issues considered to support or perpetuate the behavior.

The first treatment issue which must be addressed is the initial suppression of the offending behavior through outside control, comprehensive monitoring and supervision, peer pressure, etc. The offender must be able, very shortly, to admit to his offense and to alter the defense mechanisms and attitudes which have helped perpetuate his behavior. He must also be able to identify and intervene in the chain of environmental and psychological events typically leading to his acting out.

This will include, for many residents, the identification and alteration of the highly reinforcing practice of masturbating to, or ruminating on, deviant sexual fantasy material.

The offender must also acquire a thorough knowledge of the total effects of his behavior on the victim(s) and on himself. This requires the development of genuine empathy and respect for the feelings and well-being of other people.

Each client at Alpha is required to demonstrate a thorough understanding of human sexuality and to be able to identify and develop appropriate sexual values stressing respect and empathy

for persons with whom one wishes to be sexually involved. This implies the severing of many clients' pairing of their sexuality with exploitation, violence, hostility, need for power, and need to humiliate others.

Most serious sexually deviant behavior, particularly if it has become patterned, is fueled in part by unresolved emotional trauma and conflict. Intensive therapeutic intervention to relieve and resolve underlying emotional issues through affective and/or dynamic treatment modes is a treatment goal. An offender's cognitive distortions are also addressed.

Reducing chemical abuse and dependency is of primary concern at Alpha. Drugs and alcohol generally exacerbate sexual as well as other forms of misconduct. Sometimes, offenders use drugs and alcohol to reduce the fear of consequences which might otherwise stop them from acting out. Drugs and alcohol are also used in many cases to medicate the emotional stress (guilt, fear, etc.) caused by the negative behavior. Drugs tend to reduce an already diminished level of judgment, reasoning, and impulse control. These drug-related phenomena, of course, directly affect the probability of an individual acting out.

**A** comprehensive discussion of all treatment goals aimed at achieving the overall goal of reducing or eliminating sexually inappropriate behavior is not practical in a description of this scope. In response to the need, however, to document these other important program goals, the following outline is provided. It is by no means an all-inclusive listing, but is provided primarily to identify some major problem areas which are addressed at Alpha.

#### **I. General Outcome Goals**

- A. Reduce serious crime and victimization of innocent people.
- B. Reduce the probability of sexual misconduct recurring.
- C. Reduce reliance on public assistance.
- D. Provide services at a cost to the taxpayers that are less than the cost of incarceration.

#### **II. Client Intra-Psychic (Psychological) Goals**

##### **A. Behavioral**

1. Encourage client to admit to and take full responsibility for offense.
2. Address with client possible compulsive characteristics of offense and sexual behavior.
3. Increase the likelihood of conscientious, responsible, appropriate sexual behavior.
4. Address and alter behavioral events leading to acting out such as masturbating to deviant fantasies, identifying potential targets, use of violence or abusively oriented pornography, etc.
5. Increase client's proficiency at daily living skills.

6. Increase client's skill level in interacting socially in friendships, romantic/sexual, and other types of relationships.
7. Strengthen client's capability of controlling his own behavior through effective ego intervention.
8. Increase client's overall capacity to respond honestly and responsibly in all areas of life.
9. Increase general capacity to behave in a conscientious and responsible fashion.
10. Extinguish or decrease deviant, inappropriate, and counterproductive sexual behavior.
11. Extinguish or decrease antisocial behavior in general.

#### B. Affective

1. Help client reduce connection between destructive emotive state (anger, need for power) and sexuality.
2. Increase pairing of love, friendship, and empathy with sexuality.
3. Increase client's capacity to identify and express feelings appropriately.
4. Resolve client's past and present emotional trauma through intensive psychotherapy.
5. Reduce client's feelings of shame, inadequacy, mistrust, and hostility.
6. Increase client's capacity to experience feelings of genuine remorse, love, happiness, trust, empathy, etc.
7. Increase client's capacity and likelihood of healing affective wounds through trusting relationships with others.

#### C. Cognitive

1. Challenge client's distorted and ineffective belief systems and values.
2. Challenge and confront client's cognitive defense system perpetuating negative behavior.
3. Educate client thoroughly in the area of sexuality.
4. Alleviate client's identity confusion by nurturing positive sexual and personal identity.
5. Educate client thoroughly in decision-making skills.
6. Improve general cognitive functioning and problem-solving ability.

### III. Environmental Goals

#### Peer Group

1. Provide positive and influential peer group in therapy.
2. Give responsibility of providing and carrying through treatment objectives to peer group.
3. Create norms in peer group stressing honesty, empathy, taking of personal responsibility for behavior, etc.
4. Establish "family" atmosphere among peers, thus promoting strong bonds of friendship, care, and trust.
5. Encourage through peer group a sense of "belonging" and reduction of self-centeredness.

### IV. Miscellaneous Goals

- A. Reduce or eliminate chemical and alcohol abuse through specialized groups, individual therapy, and outside resources.
- B. Increase level of vocational adjustment.
  1. Improve work behavior.
  2. Improve job seeking skills.
  3. Improve ability to achieve and maintain responsible self-support.
- C. Improve skills in financial management.
- D. Address and change maladaptive culturally reinforced values.
  1. General sexual objectification of humans by society.
  2. Stereotypic male and female roles stressing aggressiveness in men, passivity in women, etc.
  3. Pairing of violence, need for power, etc., and sexuality reflected in mass media.
- E. Improve parenting skills.
- F. Obtain a minimum educational level of high school diploma or the equivalent.

Unfortunately, it is impossible to adequately describe all therapeutic aspects of intensive programs. Because of the basic structure, environment, and constant observed interactions with others, many therapeutic experiences occur for each resident.

*Since Alpha's residential program is located in the community rather than in a secure institution, concern for community safety is always a primary consideration in the day-to-day operation of the program. Public safety is inherent in all staff decision-making.*

